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ABSTRACT

This study did a preliminary examination of Peace Education Commission (PEC) members' views on teacher training in relation to peace education in schools. A questionnaire was mailed to all PEC members and 75 questionnaires were returned from 33 different countries. Findings included the following: (1) teacher training is of great importance; (2) training related to peace education should be included in both basic teacher training and in-service training; (3) little is currently done in teacher training related to peace education; (4) a broad-range policy for teacher training covering several approaches to peace education received strong support from the respondents; (5) with regard to how peace education should be related to the total system of teacher education, a clear majority (60 percent) favored a combination of special courses on peace education within basic teacher training as well as promoting peace education objectives and procedures in a number of different courses in basic teacher education; (6) 41 respondents could not recommend a peace education handbook; and (7) many saw significant risks and difficulties in developing peace education. Finally, a variety of ideas were presented on how to promote the idea of teacher training for peace education. (Contains 22 references.) (JB)

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TEACHER TRAINING IN RELATION TO PEACE EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Views expressed by members of the PEC network

Åke Bjerstedt

In early 1994 a questionnaire on teacher training in relation to peace education in schools was mailed to members of the Peace Education Commission (PEC, a subgroup of the International Peace Research Association). These notes report on some major trends in the answers and illustrate the viewpoints expressed, based on a study of the first 75 questionnaires returned, representing respondents from 33 different countries.

TEACHER TRAINING IN RELATION TO PEACE EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Views expressed by members of the PEC network

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Introduction

Some of us concerned with peace education in schools think that teacher education is very important; if the teachers do not get acquainted with peace education possibilities and procedures in their training, we cannot expect them to do a good job as peace educators. At the same time, some of us have the impression that in most countries, nothing or very little is done in average teacher education settings to prepare teachers for peace education.

This is what some of us think today. But what is the situation in different countries at present with respect to teacher training in relation to peace education in schools? And to what degree do we have some consensus among peace educators as to the importance of teacher training and as to the character of the peace education preferred in these contexts?

To get some idea about the opinions in these and related matters within the PEC network, a questionnaire was mailed in early 1994 to members of this group (together with other regular information materials). These notes report on some major trends in the answers and illustrate the viewpoints expressed.

based on a study of the first 75 questionnaires returned, representing respondents from 33 different countries.

The Importance of Teacher Training

The first question asked was: "What is your general opinion about the importance of teacher training in relation to peace education in schools?" The respondents were requested to check one of three alternatives: (1) "Teacher training is extremely important; without special efforts in teacher training, most teachers will not be able to do a good job as peace educators." – (2) "Teacher training is important, but many other conditions are equally important in order to get a good peace education in our schools (such as written recommendations from school authorities, the existence of relevant teaching materials, etc." – (3) "Teacher training is not particularly important; other conditions are much more important for making our schools good instruments for peace education."

The distribution of answers clearly indicates that our PEC members feel that teacher training is of great importance. Out of the 75 respondents, no less than 41 chose the first alternative ("extremely important"), whereas only 2 marked the third one ("not particularly important"). In addition, 31 respondents selected the middle alternative ("important, but..."), and one person chose not to reply to this particular question.

In brief, then, only very few persons judged teacher training as not particularly important, while a majority had the opposite opinion. Expressed in another way: More than 95% chose one of the two alternatives focusing on the importance of teacher training and more than 50% marked the rather emphatic alternative "extremely important".

The repondents had an opportunity to offer comments on this question. The following are some examples:

- A trained teacher in a school environment where peace education is not given full support will find it difficult to be effective. Nevertheless training is a must.
- I recognize the importance, in particular contexts, of special authorization etc. But my research on teachers and innovation generally shows that teacher competence and self-efficiency are highly relevant if they are to be agents of change.
- In many cases there is an importance of educating the teachers and raising their awareness for the subject before training them.

- When peace education is not seen as central to teacher education, teachers will continue to see it as peripheral to their educational activities.
- To produce functional peace educators and learners we need activities that involve analysing and discriminating, evaluating and synthesizing for the solution of problems in the immediate environment at large, leading to the international-global issues.
- The need is most urgent in post-conflict societies or where conflicts exist. Our experience in Lebanon underlines the urgency of teacher training in this field.

Basic Teacher Training vs. In-service Training

While the first question addressed teacher training in general terms, the second question introduced a distinction between two kinds of training, using the following formulations: "Teacher training can be subdivided into two major components: (a) basic teacher training (the theoretical and practical education arranged before entering teaching in schools); and (b) in-service training (courses or workshops arranged for teachers at various times during their active careers as teachers)." The respondents were requested to indicate the statement(s) he or she agreed with (one or more) among those that followed. Three such statements were presented: (1) "If we have to choose, investing in in-service training is more important than investing in basic teacher training." – (2) "If we have to choose, investing in basic teacher training is more important than investing in in-service training." – (3) "It is very important to include training related to peace education in both basic teacher training and in-service training."

The outcome shows a considerable consensus: Almost 80% of the respondents (or 59 of the 75) chose the third alternative. Among those who emphasized one of the two components of teacher training, we found a fairly even distribution, with a slight predominance of the in-service side. (Six people chose alternative 1, four alternative 2; five marked 1 *and* 3, and one person 2 *and* 3.).

In general, then, our peace educators tended to feel that it is very important to include training related to peace education in *both* basic teacher training *and* in in-service training.

In the questionnaire there was also some room for "other reactions, explanations or comments". A few quotes will illustrate:

- While there are many anxiety-provoking aspects of basic (pre-service) teacher education, you need to 'start with them young' as well as work-

ing with practicing teachers.

- Teachers should be taught theoretical aspects of peace education, like nonviolence, in basic teacher education and practical aspects, like conflict resolution, in in-service training.
- In my opinion, PE is a dynamic pedagogical concept which has to be trained and practised permanently.
- To introduce PE into basic training it is necessary to in-service their supervisers in the field; otherwise students will model their behaviour on the untrained teachers.
- Prejudices and opinions tend to be established early – thus it is important to have initiatives in peace education introduced at an early stage.

The Present Situation in Different Countries

Although it is not easy for anyone to know the situation of teacher training in relation to peace education in a country, it seemed reasonable to try to get some information and judgements in this respect when we approached this group of people with expertise and special interest in peace education. Our third question started with these formulations: "What is the situation with respect to teacher training in your own country (or state or region)? Check the statement(s) you agree with (one or more)". Four statements were presented: (1) "As far as I know, nothing or almost nothing is done at present in teacher training to prepare teachers for peace education." – (2) "Some efforts are made in basic teacher training by especially interested teachers or especially interested teacher colleges; but most teachers today will not have had any particular basic training in this area." – (3) "Some courses or workshops are arranged to introduce peace education to active teachers (as in-service training) but most teachers today will not have taken part in such courses or workshops." – (4) "Teacher training efforts in the field of peace education are now quite common, so that most teachers will have had some such training". Since for some people it might not be quite self-evident which area his or her answer referred to, the questionnaire also asked "Which country (or state or region) does your answer refer to here (question 3)?"

The response distribution shows clearly that rather little is done in teacher training related to peace education in schools at present. Only one of the alternatives (the fourth one) refers to a situation where such training is common; and only one single respondent in the total group of 75 marked this alternative. The most frequent separate response was the first alternative ("nothing or almost nothing is done..."); about 30% of the respondents marked this. But

we also had a number of people marking alternative 2 (28%), alternative 3 (16%) or both alternatives 2 and 3 at the same time (21%).

The general picture is thus that so far very little has been done in teacher training: *either* we have a situation where nothing (or almost nothing) is done *or* a situation where single initiatives are taken but without reaching the majority of the teachers.

On this particular question, the results may be somewhat blurred by the fact that some countries are only represented by one person in our group, while other countries have several respondents. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to add an alternative way of analyzing the results, using just one representative from each of the 33 countries involved (selecting in this case the person answering first, when several respondents were available from a particular country).

While the percentage distribution changed somewhat in this alternative calculation, the overall pattern was the same, with some extra emphasis on response alternative 1 ("nothing or almost nothing...") which now got about 40% of the replies.

Other answers or comments were encouraged. Some illustrations follow:

- No institutional commitment to peace education, so its promotion and availability depends on individual teachers... Therefore ... when the individual goes, the peace education goes. (Queensland, Australia.)
- Sadly, this *very* important aspect of teacher education (and education generally) has been all but eliminated from consideration. 'Academic' education and market economics are the driving philosophy. (England and Wales.)
- Much of the content and methodology of 'peace education' is dealt with by teacher trainers under different headings (e.g. development education, religion studies, personal and social studies, education for mutual understanding). (Ireland.)
- The introduction of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) as a core part of the N. Ireland school curriculum has made teacher training provision essential here. (N. Ireland.)
- A programme I have co-written and for which I am NZ trainer – 'Cool Schools Peer Mediation' – has aroused national interest and schools around the whole country are requesting training. In Auckland whole staffs are training. (New Zealand.)
- I have been in the field of school education for the last twenty years and have found some moral lesson text book used and civics in which could be elements of peace education. But the emphasis on/of peace education is absent. (India.)
- We use training for intercultural understanding or international education. There is *no* peace education course, programme etc any more in Finland.

At my university there is a course for international education. (Finland.)

- I have been offering an elective course on Peace Education with a view to introducing PE to prospective school counselors and teachers of secondary schools. Emphasis in this course is more on the 'implicit, value oriented' approach. At present there seems to be no way to make such a course an integral part of the teacher training curricula for several reasons. (Turkey.)

Various Approaches to Peace Education

One of the questions dealt with various approaches to peace education, offering a fairly long text. It started with the following background reasoning: "Peace education can be carried out with different emphases. For example: It can deal with explicit information and discussion related to peace and war issues ('knowledge and awareness approach'); or with efforts to develop peaceful values, attitudes and behaviors through modelling and arranging a peaceful school atmosphere ('implicit, value-oriented approach'); or with efforts to develop particular skills via exercises in creative conflict resolution and cooperative learning ('skills approach'). Which approach or approaches should be emphasized in teacher training, in your view?"

After this introduction, the respondents were given five statements and were instructed to check one or more of these: (1) "Teachers should be familiar with all the three approaches mentioned." – (2) "The 'knowledge and awareness approach' should be emphasized." – (3) "The 'implicit, value-oriented approach' should be emphasized." – (4) "The 'skills approach' should be emphasized." – (5) "It depends on the ages of the pupils the teacher would be responsible for; the implicit, values-oriented approach should be emphasized among teachers for lower grades; the knowledge and awareness approach is more relevant among teachers for higher grades; the skills approach may be appropriate for both groups."

The results were rather clear in one respect: Very few people considered it appropriate to emphasize only one of the three approaches described (in fact, there was only one such respondent for each of these three alternatives). Instead the votes were mainly divided among alternative 1 (25 respondents), alternative 5 (also 25) and the combination of these two alternatives (8 people). Various other combinations were marked by some respondents. But 77% of the group voted for alternative 1 *or* alternative 5 *or* a combination of these. Hence, a broad-range policy for teacher training (covering several approaches to peace education) got strong support in our expert group.

The respondents were also given some free space for other answers or comments. Some of these talk about somewhat other emphases than those referred to explicitly in the question:

- I believe that great emphasis should be put on justice and education for justice.
- Systemic Problem Approach which may include all the above. (I am working on 'Individualistic Systems Approach' now.)
- Peace education needs to be based on a holistic approach. Consequently, knowledge, values, attitudes and behavior should go hand in hand.
- The 'involvement approach': get the students directly involved in an existing peace initiative project, research, volunteer job, etc.

Other comments deal with alternative 5, indicating that this brief text should perhaps be further developed or improved upon:

- One should apply them according to developmental criteria but somewhat more differentiated than in your last statement.
- Implicit value-oriented approach also for higher grades – even University in my opinion.
- The 'knowledge and awareness approach' is also important for young children, because they talk about peace and war as well as the older ones. Teachers should guide them in their understanding and knowledge.

Other comments included various remarks, such as these:

- I personally strongly favour 'knowledge and awareness' based on structural violence as a key concept, but recognize the need for diversity and other approaches and skills.
- The content/process/school environment are parts of a seamless web – no part alone can prepare the student for a life of peace-seeking.
- Also in teacher training (in-service as well as basic) the 'skills approach' is very important. Peace education as an 'academic' study will have too little effect.
- I find it difficult to split the approaches. However, some consideration needs to be given to preparing teachers for working not only with students of different ages but of different cultural groups, gender and social classes.
- Teaching skills and values cause an inner change of attitude and empower the individual to act differently, which simply learning information does not.

Relation to the Course System

Another question deals with how peace education should be handled in the total system of the basic teacher education: "Peace education can be handled in a number of different ways in teacher training. For example: It can be dealt with in a special course on peace education; or peace education objectives and procedures may be promoted in a number of different courses (i.a. from the perspectives of different school subjects). Which strategy do you find to be the best one?" Four response alternatives were presented: (1) "A special course on peace education within basic teacher training." – (2) "Promoting peace education objectives and procedures in a number of different courses within basic teacher training." – (3) "A combination of both strategies." – (4) "I have no particular preference as to strategy."

About 9% prefer a special course, 20% vote for attention to peace education objectives in different courses. A clear majority, however, or almost 60%, prefer a combination of both strategies.

Teacher training contains a complexity of contents, for example, materials related to different school subjects. It is reasonable that it is often natural and fruitful to deal with peace education objectives from different perspectives in different courses or sub-parts of the teaching system. On the other hand, it may be useful to focus clearly upon peace education at one point in the system, that is, a special course (among other things to avoid the danger that peace education is somehow "lost" in the maze of other courses, to use a formulation from one of the respondents). These two ways of dealing with peace education can obviously be combined in order to utilize the advantages of each. This seems also to be the dominant preference in our expert group. Some further comments are illustrated in the following:

- A special course (presumably optional) might mean "preaching to the converted". It is important to reach *all* teachers.
- For peace education to be successful, the content of peace education should merge with the curriculum as a whole, to the point of losing its identity, but not its effect.
- I don't believe in a separate course of PE. Peace is something which is to be caught, not to be taught. Hence, I suggest an integrated approach in basic teacher training.
- Peace Education is a 'heavy' course with considerable emotional power, as people process their feelings about violence. It deserves a special course to deal with such powerful concepts.
- I think you need to preserve a special course or the content disappears – however, the ideal is a school which embodies peaceful values.

- Although I do work with In-service Courses training teachers at Teachers Centres, the most effective approach is whole staff training in the schools which I am currently doing with Cool Schools Peer Mediation + 2 other programmes.

Peace Education Handbooks

Item 7 in the questionnaire contained this request: "If you know of any good peace education handbook published in your country that you would recommend for use in teacher training, please give the full reference here".

Of the 75 respondents, 41 gave no handbook reference or said that they did not know any from their country. If we analyze the restricted group (dealt with above in relation to Question 3), that is, 33 experts representing 33 different countries, we get the same pattern: In 18 cases of the 33, no handbook could be referred to.

Hence, in both types of analysis, the majority (about 55%) of the respondents had no handbook to report. This means that there is an obvious need for work on developing such materials, suitable for teacher training, in many countries round the world.

Some examples of the books mentioned will be given at the end of this report. They are quite different in character, and not all of them might be quite suitable for direct use in teacher training. But they do represent an important core of literature in this area and would be useful starting-points for anyone planning to write new handbooks for countries or languages in need of new materials. (I have added a few publications not mentioned by the respondents, but well worth inclusion in such a list.)

Risks or Difficulties

At the end of the questionnaire there were two open questions (questions without fixed response alternatives). The first of these had the following formulation: "Could you see some risks or difficulties in developing teacher training related to peace education? If so, what risks or difficulties? How could they be avoided?" Let us listen to some of the answers:

- Opposition from the military and chauvinist demagogues. Compulsory introduction of a subject which is less attractive than war. Difficult to teach without 'learning by doing' which is awkward in school.

- There has been a major review and reorganization of the curriculum for 5-18-year-olds in the UK and Ireland in the past 8-10 years. Teachers have been 'overwhelmed' trying to cope with 'top-down' curriculum change. There may be a difficulty in teachers seeing P.Ed. as another task added to their workload.
- The political situation in Israel makes peace education potentially explosive. The emphasis on conflict resolution is a good way into the subject.
- (1) That it will not exemplify in the classroom the values and skills to be taught. (2) That it will be too 'pie-in-the-sky' and/or too remote from the lives of the students.
- One major difficulty is getting administrators to become interested in peace education. It is important to not give up and to continue in our efforts to share with them – over and over – how important it is.
- The teacher trainers should be peaceful people themselves, in order to make clear how peace education should influence the educational work as well as the lives of the teachers (to be). It is a matter of finding the middle ground between peace education as a topic of study and as a method of teaching.
- In the Middle East the difficulties may be the rigid nationalistic perceptions of the teachers and the whole structure of the system that is only now beginning to perceive of alternatives to war and hostility.
- The difficulties are in getting institutions to support peace ed. I usually get around this by generating courses on Multiculturalism, Anti-racism and International Education which are more easily accepted by management.
- Some difficulties like changing the present curriculum, non-availability of teachers trained in Peace Education and incurring huge expenditure. If we are serious on the matter, it is possible to change the curriculum giving scope for the inclusion of principles of peace. Second difficulty can be removed by making a proper and judicious selection of teachers and orienting them towards peace education. As regards the third difficulty, the national expenditure may be cut handsomely in various less important fields and directing the amount saved to important activities like this.
- In this part of the world where we have an Islamic regime, Islamic education is considered sufficient, since Islam represents peace, harmony and equity. The government would need much conviction to approve this measure.
- One very big difficulty: to teach cooperative skills in a very competitive society.
- The difficulties will emerge from an assymmetric power relationship. Peace education will be looked upon as submission and will therefore be rejected.
- The political authorities are still unconvinced of the need for peace education. The decision-makers in the Departments of Education are still illiterate in peace education. Overall economic cuts in education funding inhibit development of peace courses...

- One risk is that teachers become fascinated with the gadgetry of war. Another risk is that it becomes too loaded with 'oughts' and preaching.

Although a number of respondents have said that they see no particular problems or difficulties, many do, as the above quotes illustrate. Some problems are more or less specific to a specific group of countries, whereas many are fairly general in character. It is a task of peace education researchers to study these difficulties in more detail in order to come up with the most fruitful counter-measures. The information gathered from simple surveys such as the present one may be *one* starting-point.

Promoting the Idea of Teacher Training for Peace Education – General Recommendations

The final question of our questionnaire to the PEC group had the following formulation: "What could be done in your opinion to promote the idea of teacher training for peace education efforts (provided that you think it is worth promoting)? Do you have any other comments or recommendations on this topic? "Some illustrations of responses to this rather open request follow: to start with some suggestions related to the feeling that there is often a resistance towards the topic of peace education, felt to be controversial:

- (a) Link 'peace education' more directly to 'conflict resolution' training. – (b) Justify it in terms of its relevance to problems within the family, the school, and the community as well as among nations.
- In countries like Turkey, the idea should be introduced in a non-threatening, less controversial way, emphasizing more 'the skills approach', and then building on that.
- Peace education shouldn't be constructed too narrowly. It should include the topic of human rights and how to realize them in different areas, microsocial areas too.
- Perhaps we need to bow to the spirit of the times and find a new name – perhaps 'Peace Ed' sounds too pre-'New World Order'.

In other answers the need to finds ways to influence important decision-makers and to create awareness for the area of peace education are referred to:

- Get more peace educators into positions of political and institutional power. Try to influence local boards of education and then create a demand from them. Try to create demands among parents that their children

receive appropriate peace education.

- To promote the idea of teacher training we have to continue to gather support, not only from inside the school or university system but from outside sources as well. I've had meetings with local and state representatives, judges, police chiefs, the business community, parents and the media. I'm now in the process of producing a program on peace education for community television.

Other recommendations include references to various communication vehicles:

- Concentrate on people and what they do, as in my book 'Men Against War'. Ask every Ministry of Education, perhaps through UNESCO, for the name of a person who has made an outstanding contribution to peace in order to produce a better book.
- I would find a 'bank' of poems and stories (in English) very useful – possibly in the form of an anthology – also for teachers of English as a foreign language.
- More research on peace education published in 'mainline' education journals.
- Develop good materials for practice. – Create networks of teachers for peace. – Look for a good journal to disseminate experience.

One of our respondents sent a fairly detailed proposal to promote the idea of teacher training for peace education via a *multi-step training process* using an international approach. The proposal may be summarized in the following way:

Step 1: Constitution of an international working group of experts. Main task: Elaboration of an International Training Program for Trainers for Teacher Training.
Step 2: Organizing an International Training Seminar for Trainers for Teacher Training (25-30 participants from different countries during 1-3 weeks).
Examples of content:
(a) Basic knowledge of peace education (short presentation of the history of peace education, evolution of the idea and practice etc);
(b) Teaching methods and skills related to peaceful conflict resolution, cooperative and democratic procedures;
(c) Teaching materials and publications from the field.
Step 3: Teaching Training seminars organized by trained trainers included in the previous training seminar. Selection of 25-30 teachers from one country for a seminar during 1-3 weeks.
Step 4: Exchange of (sharing) the experience under Step 3 between the trainers from Step 2.

Conclusion

Members of the transnational network PEC (Peace Education Commission) were requested to answer a questionnaire on teacher training in relation to peace education. This report provides glimpses from the answers given by the first 75 respondents, representing 33 different countries. These are some of the observations made:

- A majority of the respondents felt that teacher training is of great importance in relation to peace education, marking the response alternative "Teacher training is extremely important; without special efforts in teacher training, most teachers will not be able to do a good job as peace educators".
- The group of peace educators tended further to feel that it is very important to include training related to peace education *both* in basic teacher training *and* in in-service training.
- When asking about the situation of teacher training in the country of the respondent, we found in almost all cases that rather little is done at present. *Either* we have a situation where nothing (or almost nothing) is done, *or* a situation where single initiatives are taken by especially interested teachers or colleges, but without reaching the majority of the teachers.
- Various peace education approaches were described (knowledge and awareness approach, implicit value-oriented approach, skills approach), and the group members were asked to indicate which approach or which approaches they would like to have emphasized in teacher training. Very few people considered it appropriate to emphasize only one of the approaches referred to. Instead, they felt that teachers should be familiar with all the approaches and use them differently in contact with students from different age levels. Thus, a broad-range policy (covering several approaches to peace education) got a strong support in our expert group.
- When asked about whether or not they knew any good peace education handbooks published in their own country, the majority of the respondents had no such handbook to report. Hence, there is an obvious need for work on developing such materials in many countries. Examples of books mentioned are listed; these may be a useful starting-point for work in other countries and languages.
- Many respondents saw difficulties or risks in the work of teacher training for peace education. Financial difficulties were mentioned. Difficulties in

getting peace education objectives accepted were underlined by the representatives of some countries. Differences between the peace education culture on the one hand and the dominant culture in the society on the other might be a problem (for example, teaching cooperative skills in a very competitive society).

- A rich variety of ideas about how to promote the idea of teacher training for peace education was presented.

The positive interest in the idea of teacher training (both basic training and in-service training) for peace education was very obvious in most of the replies. Hopefully, the various suggestions presented by this group of people with a special expertise and interest in peace education can provide some starting-points for future thinking and planning in this so far underdeveloped, but potentially important, area.

Note: It might be added that while most questions and answers are quoted literally, in some cases slight language improvements have been introduced without special indications in the text.

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